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HOW TO MAKE
LAMPSHADES

HOW TO MAKE LAMPSHADES

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FOREWORD

To those who appreciate the value of artistic lighting both as a means of making a house more homelike and beautiful and for the practical purposes of getting the best possible light in which to read or sew or entertain one's friends, this little book is dedicated. It is concerned chiefly with the actual business of making lamp shades, but we have also attempted to give such general principles of color, design, and lighting as will aid the reader in the best selection of the lamp which will suit his particular need. We assume for the most part that the lamp base has already been chosen. So we confine ourselves exclusively to the question of shades.

The market is flooded with every variety in shape, color and material, but it is often difficult, if not impossible, to find a suitable shade at a cost within reach. Besides, if your shade is to be individual, is to express your own personality, of course, you will not want to use a standardized article. Lamp shades, however, are not hard to make. If you possess a little ability in design and handicraft, and will follow the simple·directions contained in this book, you will certainly have no trouble in obtaining the utmost desired effect at a reasonable cost.

CHAPTER I

PLANNING YOUR ILLUMINATION

Have you ever thought of the endless possibilities offered for giving distinction to the furnishing of your home through the use of portable electric lamps? Everybody uses electric lamps nowadays, but how many consider what an important part they play in the decorative scheme of a room? By the mere pressure of a switch the entire atmosphere can be changed. Each lamp is a note of light and color, an invitation to the imagination to plan countless brilliant harmonies with other lamps. But light must not be thought of wholly as an unrelated spot. The illumination of the whole room must be considered. Study the manner in which the rays fall upon the floor, walls and ceiling. Note how they alter the appearance of the furnishings. The effect a lamp has upon its surroundings—except in cases where it is used as a purely decorative note—is usually more important than the lamp itself. Light models the form, colors and objects of a room, accentuating and sometimes even creating its atmosphere.

The first consideration in planning illumination is, therefore, the location of the furniture, wall-spaces, windows and doors. Proper proportions, agreeable lines and harmonizing color are the results to be sought. A glaring center light, for example, is entirely out of place in a living room

where the aim is to create an atmosphere of repose and ease. Nor should some fine old piece of furniture remain obscure in some dark corner, while the Victrola or radio set is displayed in a full blast of light. Your dining room silver will look best in a mellow glow suggestive of old-fashioned candles, while an indirect lamp over the table will diffuse a pleasant radiance over a tempting dinner.

At first you may not be able to attain the desired results. Taste is acquired by observation and the study of good examples. Look about you in museums, in shops, in the homes of your friends. Try to determine what is good and what is bad in the lighting of their rooms. Compare the shapes and colors of the lamp bases you observe in houses and shops with the vases you have seen in museums. Study the harmonizing of the shades with the bases through examples found in first-class decorators' shops. Then experiment for yourself. Make a life sized profile drawing of the base you have selected for your lamp. Then take a piece of newspaper and cut out patterns of different shapes possible for shades and apply them to the base. Be sure your shade is neither too large nor too small, fitted neither too high nor too low. If you will look at Figure 1 illustrated on page 10 you will note that in "A" the lamp shade is far too small, while the base is high and ungainly: "B" shows a

fat, squatty base with a shade which is out of pro-
portion and set disagreeably low; "C," on the
other hand, shows a shade which is correct in pro-
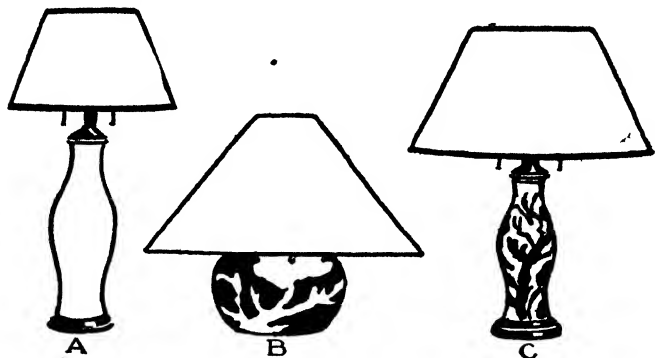portion and adjustment.

FIGURE 1

After you have ascertained the proper outline
for your lamp, the next consideration is the color.
Be sure to look at your material through the light
before making any decision, as the illuminant has a
decided effect upon the appearance of the color.
Take a piece of thin wrapping paper to represent
a lining and drape various toned fabrics over it,
hold it up to the light and analyze the effects ob-
tained. Move your lights about the room, noting
the difference in the appearance of the furnish-
ings at each move. It is only by this sort of experi-
ment that you can be sure of your result, and a
little care at the beginning will often save both
time and money when it comes to the actual se-
lection of your lamp.

CHAPTER II

GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN

In designing a lamp shade it is necessary to always keep in mind that the general feeling of the base and shade should be harmonious. If the vase is modern, the shade should be modern also. If it is antique, or a good copy, choose a shade which follows the period. For formal pedestals such as wrought iron, dark wood, antique vases or old candle-sticks, the shade may be of parchment, brocade or some solid color in silk. Frivolous decorative patterns must be saved for daintier pedestals such as boudoir lamps or bedroom lights. Never forget the purpose for which the lamp is to be used and be sure that it conforms in character to this purpose. One does not walk on the street with evening clothes in the day-time. No more should one use a Chinese pagoda lamp in a dignified library, or a heavy tapestry shade in a lady's dainty boudoir.

In addition to being suitable in color, material and style to the lamp base and to the room in which it is used, a shade must fulfill its integral purpose of distributing the light in the best possible manner. Enough general light is needed to prevent the room from appearing gloomy or dingy, and to avoid eye-strain. But a glaring illu-

mination is to be avoided, except on the occasion of a formal evening entertainment when the aim is to secure brilliancy and life. In order to prevent this glare it is best always to use shades with closed tops for table lamps, and for floor lamps also, if the top is less than five feet above the floor. A shade with an open top gives what is called indirect lighting: that is, it casts the light rays to the ceiling, which in turn reflects them back over the room. This provides a pleasant diffusion of light. A good plan is to employ one or two open-topped shades as well as several closed lamps in a room. It will give a lustrous feeling to the whole as well as providing effective light for any specific need.

A flat open shade will distribute the light over a larger space than a narrow one. Small cylindrical shades throw the reflection straight downward and hence are only appropriate for purely decorative purposes. The cone shaped, so-called Empire
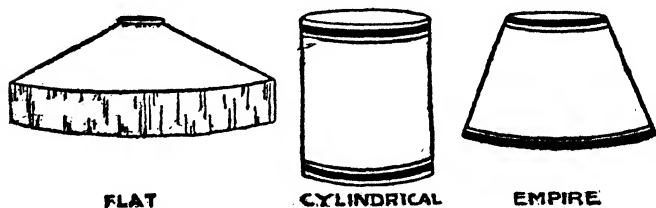

FLAT   CYLINDRICAL   EMPIRE

FIGURE 2

shade, is perhaps the most practicable of all, as it throws the light to a useful distance, at the same time obscuring all harshness. These three types of shades are illustrated in Figure 2.

The shade should be deep enough to protect the eye from the dazzle of the bulb, which should be frosted to avoid harshness. All shades must of course be of material dense enough to prevent the bulb from being seen.

CHAPTER III

COLOR

In a book of this limited size it is obviously impossible to go deeply into the principles of color. But a few general facts may not come amiss.

Do not be afraid of simplicity. When there is any doubt the lamp of simple lines and subdued color is safest. Tints and shades in soft, neutral tones will harmonize with almost any room, while you cannot go wrong on a plain medium-toned base of unpretentious outline. Only the experienced artist can be sure of using intense color and unusual shapes correctly.

There are three qualities common to every color; hue, value and intensity. By hue is meant the basic tone of the color itself, red, yellow, blue, green, violet, or their intermediates, red-orange, orange-yellow, yellow-green, blue-green, blue-violet, and red-violet. Any of these colors can be chosen as the dominant tone in your decorative scheme, and there are certain definite laws of harmony which govern the selecting of the supporting color. As many colors as desired may be introduced in small quantities for interest. By value, the second property of color, is meant the degree of dark or light that it possesses, in other words, whether it is pale or dark. Ranging from black to white a color may have various values. These are white, high-light, light, low-light, middle, high-

dark, dark, low-dark, black. Brown is a dark value of orange, écru is a very light value, almost white. So coral is a high-light value of red-orange, magenta is a dark value red-violet, while orchid is light red-violet, and so on. Intensity is the amount of grey, or degree of neutralization in the color. Grey itself is colorless, but orange may be only slightly removed from grey, or half removed. Or it may be a brilliant orange in its fullest intensity. What we call peacock blue is a blue-green in full intensity, but iris blue has a considerable degree of grey in it. Any color may be neutralized by mixing it with its complement. Inasmuch as grey has something in common with all colors it may be used as a connecting link between two inharmonious colors, or as a dominant shade in any color scheme.

Harmony may be secured by using the same hue in different values and intensities. Take two tones of orange, a golden brown for your lamp base, and old ivory for the shade. The effect will be charming. In the same way you might choose a lavender shade for a purple base. Less obvious harmonies result from the use of analogous colors, such as a combination of blue with blue-violet, or blue-green with green. You might have a greyish green shade on a blue-green base, or an old rose shade on a soft wisteria base. The possibilities of-

fered are countless. Another kind of harmony is the harmony of contrast—thus orange and blue may be used together, or red with blue-green or blue-violet in varying degrees of value and intensity. Or three colors may be employed to form a color triad. There are four possible triads;

    1—red, yellow and blue
    2—orange, green and violet
    3—orange-yellow, blue-green and red-violet
    4—red-orange, yellow-green and blue-violet

These triads offer an opportunity for many subtle effects, but it may be readily understood that such harmonies are more difficult to achieve and should not be attempted unless you have a definite feeling for color.

When you come to selecting a color for your lamp shade it is well to consider not only the lamp itself, but the general character of the room in which it is to be used. If it is for a dark, formal living room you may introduce a note of more vivid color. But if the room is already bright choose a more or less neutral shade. You might perhaps repeat the color of the walls or decorations, using a different value to give variety. That is, if your walls are buff or brown, you may try a note of orange in your shades. All the lamps in the room may be of the same color, or you may work out some definite scheme to lend interest. Gener-

ally speaking the larger the shade the less intense should be the color, and vice versa. In design the careful distribution of analogous colors has much to do with binding the decorative scheme together, because analogous colors have a tendency to group themselves. Lamps may be used as accents in the decoration of the room, and if like in color to the rest of the room, should be either brighter, lighter or darker than the other objects—that is, fuller in intensity or higher or lower in value.

In combining two different colors in a shade remember that the result seen through artificial light will be approximately the color which is common to the two. In general, tones lose blue and gain red when lighted by artificial means. Warmer colors are better than cold ones. Yellows in such shades as canary, lemon or light amber are unbecoming to the face, and under ordinary circumstances are to be avoided. Remember always that the light is going to illuminate objects and people. Do not choose a green shade for a dinner table even if it exactly suits your lamp base and the color scheme of the room. It will have a most unpleasant effect on the appearance of your guests.

For those in doubt the safe rule is to subdue the color and grey it. Only an experienced artist can use pure intensities with safety. But the chief aim, is to secure harmony and to avoid discord.
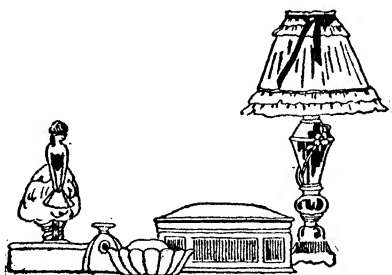
CHAPTER IV

MATERIALS FOR SHADES

Taffeta, heavy China silk, printed silk, painted silk, brocade, georgette, crêpe, brocaded chiffon, metallic brocade, velvet, almost any silk material may be used for lamp shades. Cretonnes, linens, tapestry and gold cloth are also occasionally used. And shades are sometimes made of mica, metal and glass. Linen may be shellacked and decorated with designs in oil paint. The use of mica in cylinders or panels makes a charming shade for small ornamental lamps with wrought iron bases. The cretonnes and chintzes are good with wicker stands for porch lamps, etc. English prints and calicoes, unlined, are sometimes suitable for bedrooms, and might be particularly adapted to a child's room. Even canvas, wall paper and crêpe paper have been used for shades, the latter in particular for temporary use as party decorations, for summer cottages, and so on. Parchment paper is generally the material used for shades on which the design is to be printed.

In the matter of trimming the choice is almost as unrestricted as in the case of materials. Braid is most often used, as it is an easy and effective way to cover the seams where the silk or parchment is fastened to the wire frame. Silk or bead

fringe is also common, but as fringe intercepts direct light, care must be taken that it is neither too long nor too thin. Flounces may be used to finish off shallow shades at top and bottom. Chenille, metallic lace, ruching, ribbon, moss and gimp are all suitable trimmings. When the silk is not fastened to the frame but merely thrown over it, it may be fastened at the corners with velvet or gold or silver tassels to act as weights.

Lining for shades should preferably be white or light cream in tone, as this does not absorb too much light and acts as a good reflector. Even parchment shades are sometimes painted white inside, or have a light colored fabric lining to increase their reflection power. Colored linings, notably rose, will tint the light softly and in many instances may be used with gratifying results.

CHAPTER V

HOW TO MAKE SILK SHADES

The groundwork for all shades is a wire frame. These frames may be purchased in an endless variety of sizes and shapes in any Art Supply store or the Art Goods department of any large department store. When buying the frame you should also purchase a sufficient number of bolts of binding tape the same color as the lining. In case you are making a handsome silk shade it is best always to use silk binding tape, but cotton may be employed for chintz or linen.

To bind your frame, first unfasten your bolt of tape and unwind it for a short distance, but not enough so that it will tangle. Then holding the frame in your left hand and starting with the bottom wire wind the tape tightly and smoothly, as illustrated in Figure 3 "A," without allowing it to bunch or overlap too thickly, until the wire is completely covered. When you have finished, fasten the ends with a tack stitch. Next cover the top wire in the same manner. It is not absolutely necessary to wind the supporting wires as in Figure 3 "B," unless your shade is to be unlined, but if you do bind them the result will be a handsomer and more finished article.

Always put in the lining of your shade first, stretching it on the *inside* of the frame. All inter-

linings go on next, one at a time, and are stretched on the *outside* of the frame. The exterior cover is put on last.
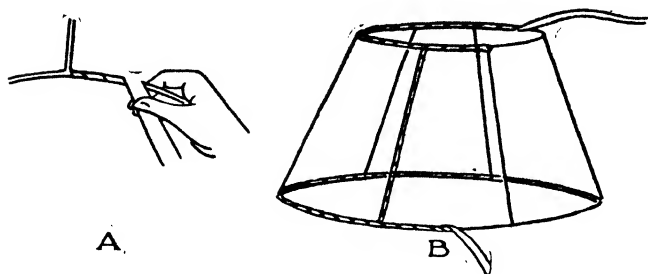

FIGURE 3

Cut your material one inch longer than the greatest circumference (or bottom wire) of your shade—unless it is to be pleated, when it should be twice the circumference—and two inches deeper than its height. All linings should be pulled as tight as possible between the upper and lower wires of the frame and worked over until they are quite smooth and unwrinkled.

Suppose you are putting on a straight lining and have your material cut as above directed. Now pin one edge smoothly to the bottom wire (see Figure 4 "A"), being careful always to use enough pins to prevent any slipping or wrinkling

of the fabric. After it is pinned in place seam the ends. Then stretch the goods tightly up to the top wire. Distribute the extra fullness evenly—unless you are making an oval frame, in which case you may group the gathers at the two ends—and pin into place (see Figure 4 "B"). With an overcasting stitch sew both edges to the binding tape on the top and bottom wires and cut off all surplus material, leaving perhaps a quarter of an inch to give strength, but being careful that not enough remains to bunch or show. Figure 4 "C" illustrates how the linings should look when completed.
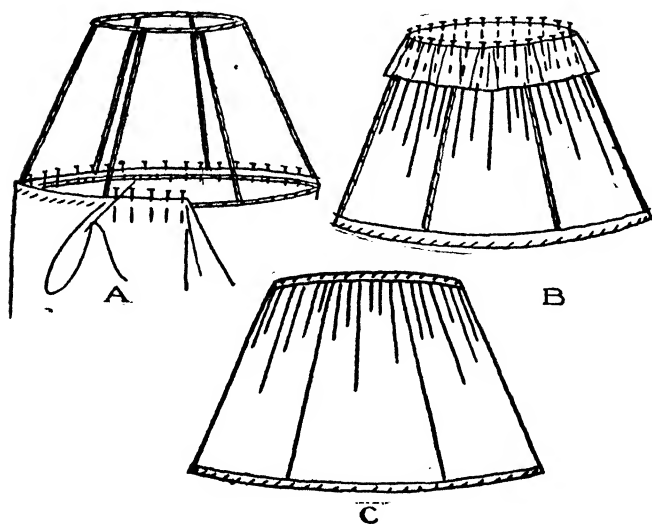
FIGURE 4

The advantage of a bias lining over a straight one is that it can be stretched flat without gathering. In case you are going to interline your shade you may find it less bulky. In any case it is sure to go on uniformly, although it is somewhat more difficult to handle. Cut the material to the same measurements as for a straight lining, that is one inch longer than the circumference of the bottom wire and two inches deeper than the side wires. Pin the long edge to the top wire, easing on a little and using plenty of pins (see Figure 5 "A"). In the same manner fasten the opposite edge to the bottom wire, stretching the fabric sufficiently to fit. Now work it with your pins until all the wrinkles come out and the lining is smooth. Seam the edges and overcast the lining to the frame. Finally, trim off all the surplus material. When this is done the lining will be smooth and neat in appearance as shown in the illustration Figure 5 "B."
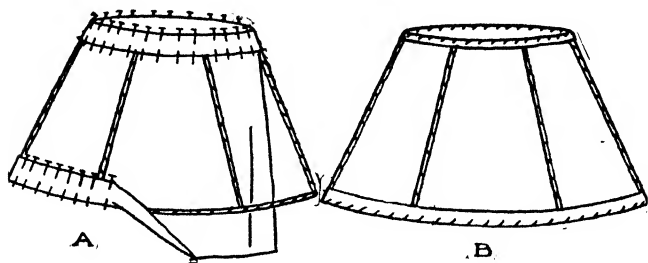
FIGURE 5

If in order to give more density to the material or to obtain a desired color effect the shade is to be interlined, the interlining goes on next. After choosing your material cut it into two pieces each two inches deeper than the cross wires and half an inch longer than half the circumference of the bottom wire of the frame. Select one piece of the goods and sew the short edge of it to a cross wire. See Figure 6 "A." Then pin at top and bottom. Next sew the other half to the same cross wire and finish the seam neatly as in Figure 6 "B." Pin to top and bottom.
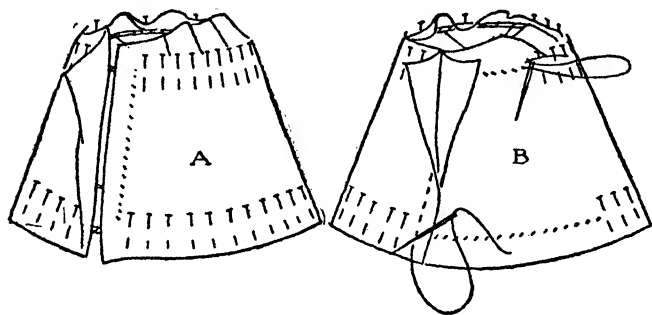
Seam the ends and cut off any surplus material, turn back the edges into a narrow hem and overcast with small stitches. See Figure 7 "A." Lastly sew at top and bottom, overcast back the edges and cut the material off close. Figure 7 "B" shows the completed interlining.

For the outside cover of the shade the silk should also be cut one inch longer than the greatest circumference and two inches wider than the depth of the frame. Beginning one inch from the selvage edge, stretch the selvage up the first cross wire, pinning it in the center to the binding tape which has previously been wound on the frame. See Figure 8 "A." Then stretch it straight
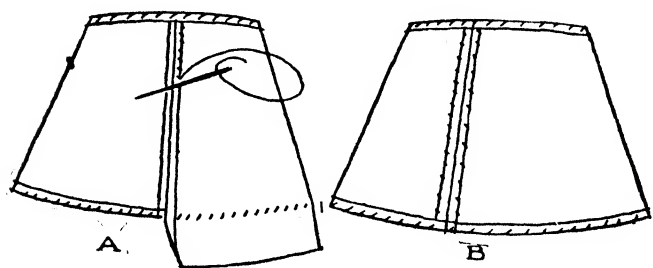

FIGURE 7

over to the middle of the next section. Pin smoothly up and down the side wires as in Figure 8 "B," running the straight of the goods perpendicular with the wire, and distributing the fullness evenly. Then pin firmly to the next side wire in the same way. Continue thus over each section.
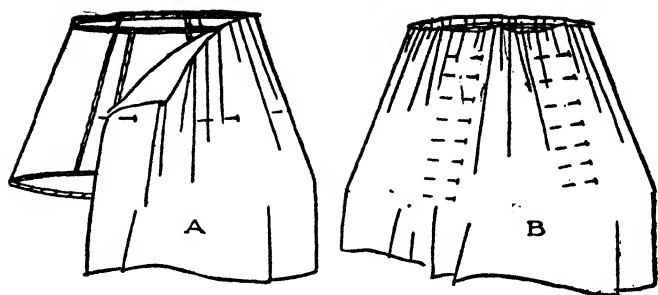
FIGURE 8

Seam the edges as in Figure 9 "A" and cut off the surplus material. Now turn a small hem at the top and bottom, making the edges even with the wires, and run a gathering thread through each (see Figure 9 "B").
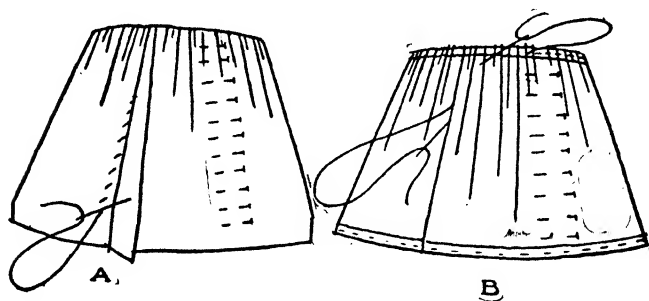

FIGURE 9

Pin and overcast the bottom hem to the base wire, as illustrated in Figure 10 "A." Then pin and overcast to the top in a like manner, being careful that the gathers are even. You may allow the edge to extend in a kind of puff for an inch or an inch and a half above the top wire all around the frame. The shade is now complete. See Figure 10 "B."
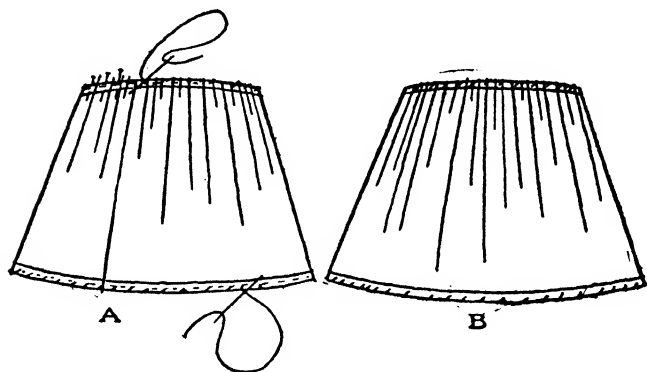
FIGURE 10

Figure 11 shows several ways of finishing a shade in the same material. If you prefer you may also use braid, fringe, or whatever other decoration you choose. Sew this trimming around both the upper and lower rows of gathers, with a short stitch on the right and a long stitch on the wrong side of the frame. Your lamp shade is now complete.

Of course there are countless variations on this pattern, some of which are described and illustrated in the following paragraphs, but these directions are the basic rules for making silk lamp shades.
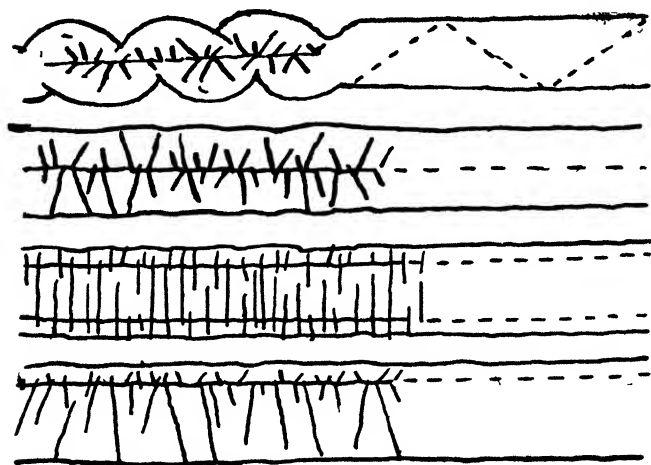
BATIK

Batiked silk makes a lovely silk shade, but it takes a great deal of skill and knowledge to do much in the way of definite design. The different stages of stopping out parts of the design with wax and of dyeing each color separately makes this process quite a complicated study. But those

who are not sufficient artists to do such skilled work in design may content themselves with tie and dye, which is very effective and not difficult to do. For simple shading wet the fabric thoroughly in clear water. Make your dye bath, and hold one end of the moistened cloth vertically in the dye for a few moments, then immerse deeper, and continue the process until the desired results are obtained. Interesting effects are to be had by first knotting or tying the silk in different places and then immersing it in the dye. It comes out in strange patterns and often in most attractive ones. The process may be elaborated by using various dye solutions in different colors. In this case be sure to dry the material thoroughly before untying the knots. Then tie in new places and the material is ready for the next dye bath.

If you can do Batik your lamp shades may become veritable works of art. On page 31 is illustrated a lamp shade made on heavy wisteria satin with a design in deeper purple and set on a lamp base of pottery in a bluish lavender color. The lining is the same in tone as the silk of the shade, and the whole is simply bound with wisteria colored braid. While it is unostentatious and not elaborate, its elegrance lies in the richness of the material employed and the workmanship of the Batik de-

sign dyed into it. For those who cannot do Batik—and it requires an experienced designer to obtain really desirable effects—tied-and-dyed work offers a possible substitute.

APPLIQUÉ

The hundreds of beautiful prints on silk, cotton and linen which one finds in the shops today should suggest motifs of design for lamp shade decoration. The print as a whole may be too colorful for the room for which you are designing a shade, but what could be more delightful than a unit of that design cut out and appliquéd on a background color which harmonizes with your room.

On page 32 is illustrated a white silk pongee bedroom or boudoir shade trimmed with a motif cut out of cretonne and appliquéd on with bright-colored wool. Wool flowers might be used also, or funny little animals cut from calico and applied to colored ginghams in this way. Most amusing lamps may be made for the children's room from these appliquéd stuffs. Your ingenuity will be taxed to the utmost. Very pretty silk shades, too, will result from this treatment.
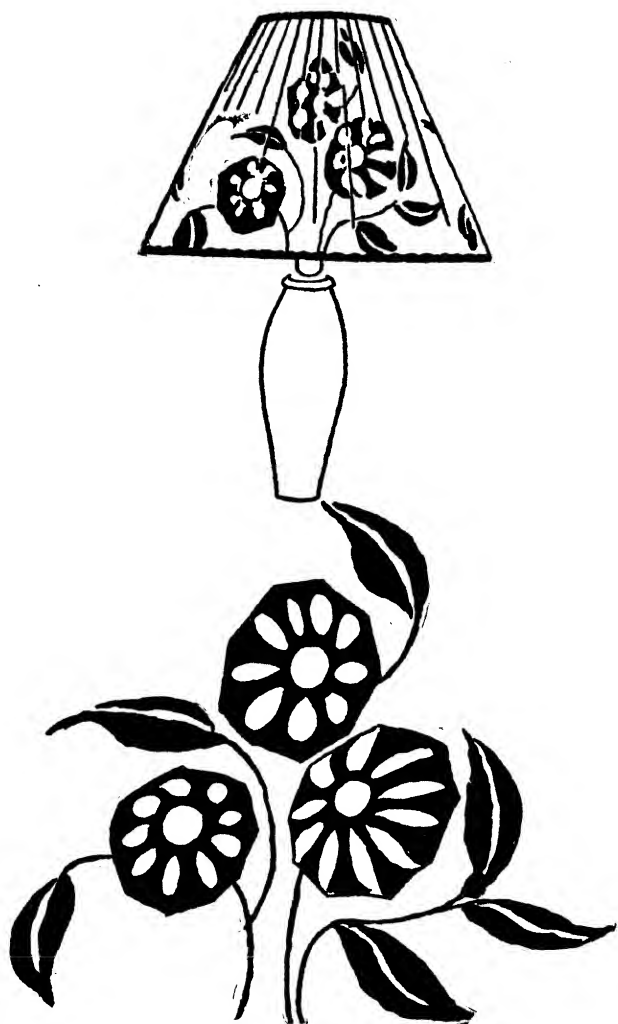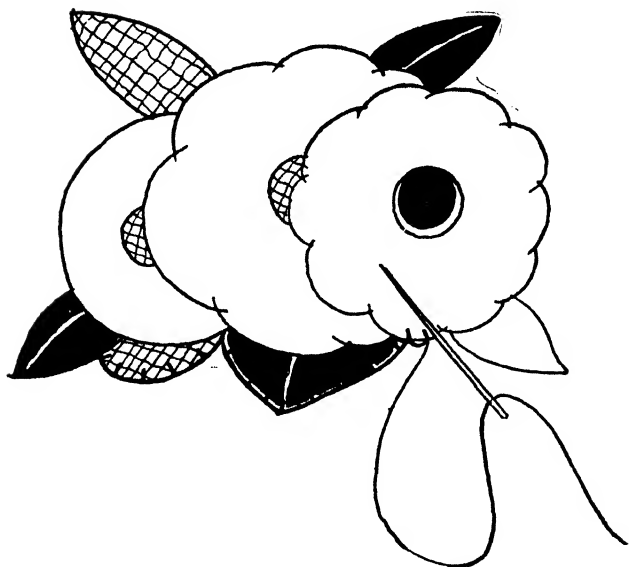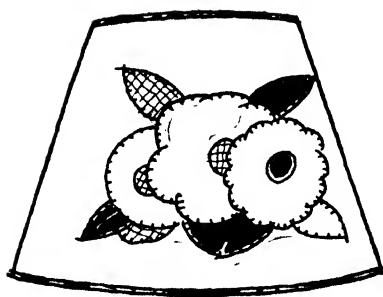
CHAPTER VI

HOW TO MAKE PARCHMENT SHADES

We now come to the question of parchment shades, which rival the silk in popularity and general usage. They are perhaps more practical as they can be easily cleaned with a damp cloth. Also parchment lends itself readily to decoration with oil or sealing-wax colors applied in original designs or by means of transfer patterns, which are now made by the leading pattern manufacturers everywhere.

Attractive, serviceable, easy to decorate, the parchment shade undoubtedly deserves its popularity. It is no longer necessary to consider even the cost of genuine sheet parchment, which at one time made this type of shade very expensive. Several imitations known as Parchmentized Paper have been developed which satisfactorily serve the same purpose. These can be obtained at any Art Supply store or department store. Also a liquid for parchmentizing paper, known as Parchment Finish, is manufactured by De Voe and Reynolds, or you can make the imitation yourself with a piece of heavy Whatman's or Strathmore paper and a bottle of De Voe's Purified Linseed Oil.

Thin the oil with turpentine, using two tablespoonfuls to half a cup of oil. Lay your paper over

several thicknesses of newspaper and rub the oil on both sides with a piece of cheesecloth. Allow this to soak in overnight.

This paper can then be tinted with either oil paint or sealing-wax paint. When oil paint is used it should be mixed with a medium of linseed oil and turpentine. Be sure your paint is very thin, almost like water, putting on as many coats as necessary (one at a time after the former coat is entirely dry). A thick paint will cause a streaked effect which will look badly when seen through the light. Use a large, flat brush, and rub with a soft cloth until the tone is even and the texture shows to best advantage. It is advisable to hold the paper up to the light as you work, so as to be sure it will not appear streaked when the light shines through it. To obtain a mottled, antique effect pat with a soft wad of cheesecloth while the paint is still wet. The back of the shade may be painted flat or stippled like the outside.

If sealing-wax paint is used make a thin paint by mixing the sealing wax with enough denatured alcohol to cover it and allowing it to stand for twelve to twenty-four hours. Then stir with a stick and thin it until the consistency is that of rich cream. Reduce this with alcohol until it is almost like water and apply as described above.

Yellow, burnt sienna, Chinese blue, rose mad-

der, alizaron crimson, terre verte, are the colors which give the best transparency for the shade and decorations.

When the paint is dry apply a thin coat of white shellac over the entire surface of the right side. You will now have a paper which is a very good imitation of parchment.

The basis of a parchment shade, like the basis of a silk one, is a wire frame. Select a simple shape, however, as parchment is not adapted to frills and fancy lines. Paint the wire of the frame with white oil paint or enamel and allow it to dry thoroughly.

The next step is to make a pattern for your shade. Lay your frame on a piece of newspaper and roll it along, tracing the line made by the top and bottom wires. Then cut out along the line you have traced, as in Figure 12 "A."

From this pattern you can then safely cut your parchment paper, being sure to leave an extra half inch at all edges.

When you have fitted the parchment to the frame sew with a buttonhole stitch about one half inch long to the base and top of your wire frame. Catch the side edges with three or four paper clamps. (See Figure 12 "B".) Cover the edges with gold or other braid, sewing with short stitches on the right, long stitches on the wrong side of the shade.

The design or decoration may be applied to the parchment with either oil or sealing-wax paint. Also this may be done before or after mounting the parchment on the frame. As you work, hold the parchment up occasionally so that the light shines through it. In this way you are able to de-
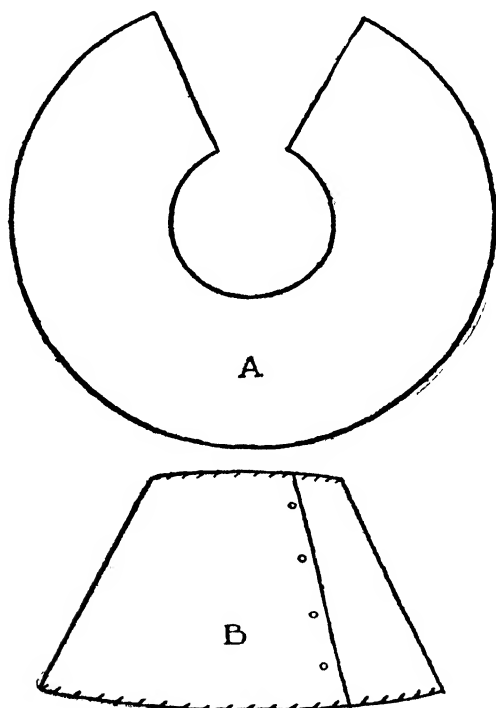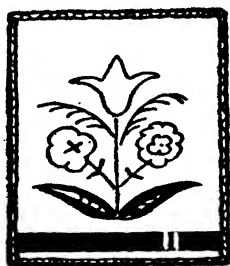

FIGURE 12

termine exactly how the color will appear when the light is on as well as when it is off. Use Jap-a-lac for solid black notes, and be sure to do all outlining in India ink. The colors used for the design should be transparent, as opaque colors show up black under the light.

CHAPTER VII

HOW TO DECORATE PARCHMENT SHADES

It is not at all necessary that you be experienced in the creation and execution of original designs in order to decorate lamp shades. Such designs will naturally be more individual than anything else, but if you show good taste in the selection of motif and color harmony you can decorate parchment shades in many attractive and satisfactory ways, even though you are unable to copy and paint the designs on the parchment. Most of the large pattern companies are now marketing stencil and transfer patterns designed expressly for lamp shades. Also everywhere about you, in books, magazines, wallpapers, cretonnes, there are designs which could be successfully applied as decoration to your shades. Any of these or any of the motifs illustrated in this book can easily be enlarged or reduced to fit your shade in the following manner:

If it is a small design which is to be enlarged, rule it off into quarter-inch squares if the design is very small or into half-inch squares if it is of average size, such as the illustrations in this book. If the design is to be enlarged one and a half, two or three times, rule off on a piece of white

A

B

[39]
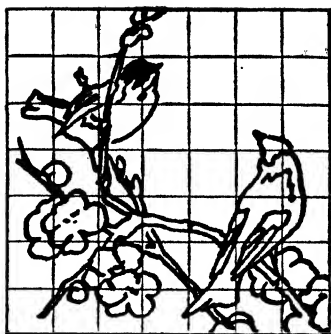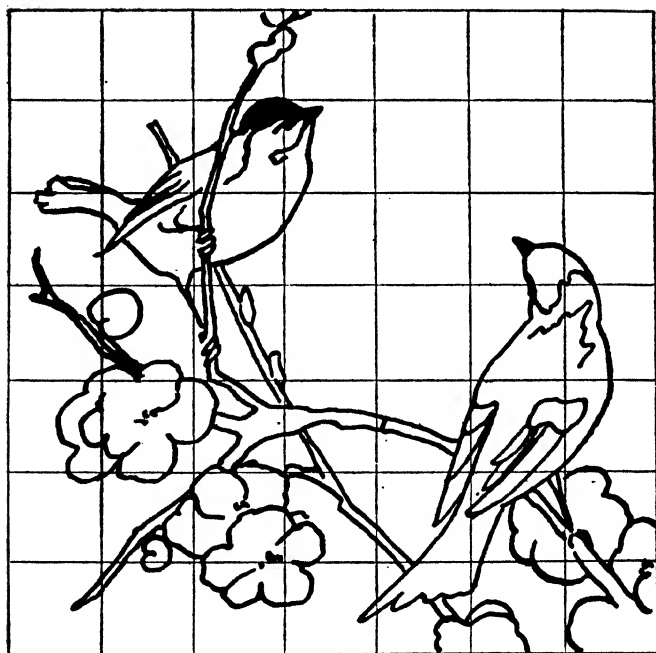
paper squares which are one and a half, two or three times as large as the squares ruled on the design. For example, if the design is ruled into half-inch squares and you wish it to be twice the size, rule your paper into one-inch squares. You can then copy the lines of the design, square by square, onto the larger surface. It is not difficult and will give you an accurate reproduction of the illustration. The illustrations on page 39 show a design (A) marked off into quarter-inch squares, and (B) shows the design enlarged twice size on a surface marked into half-inch squares. If you wish to reduce a large design the principle is just reversed. Mark off large squares on the design and copy off on paper which is marked off into proportionally smaller squares.

When you have your enlarged sketch, place it over your parchment with a piece of carbon paper between and trace the design onto the shade. Paint it with oil and complete the shade in the usual manner.

It is not necessary that you be able to execute designs in oil or sealing-wax paint in order to make attractive parchment shades, because there are numerous other ways of decorating them. It is possible to buy lamp shade paper with the design already in it, which in many cases will

answer the need as well as the hand painted shade. Also certain wallpapers make exceptionally attractive shades. The variety of shades which can be made from wallpaper is endless. Avoid matching the paper in the room, however. It may be too much of a good thing and is no more desirable than a hat and a dress made of the same material.

Lamp shade papers and wallpapers are cut from a pattern in the same manner as the parchment is cut. If the paper is heavy enough it can be mounted on the frame without any backing, but if it is very lightweight it should be glued smoothly to a piece of parchment paper before mounting on the frame. Maps, and old prints can be sewed or glued to the parchment as panels of decoration against an attractive background color. Silhouettes, which can be purchased at any Art store, are glued to a well-toned parchment and the result is delightful. Motifs of design cut from wallpaper or figured paper and appliquéd with glue to the parchment offer unlimited possibilities. Any and every kind of attractive paper can, with a little ingenuity, be applied as decoration for lamp shades. You may hesitate about using any of the above suggestions, having in mind that these delicate papers soil easily and might not prove practical, but this objection is easily over-

come by giving them a lacquer finish. A lacquer finish not only enhances the shade, but makes it very serviceable because it can easily be wiped off with a damp cloth without in any way injuring the paper.
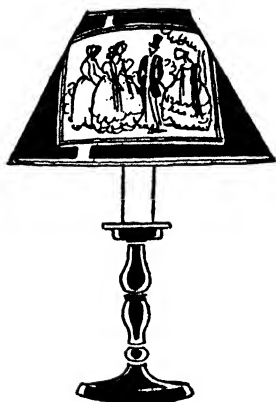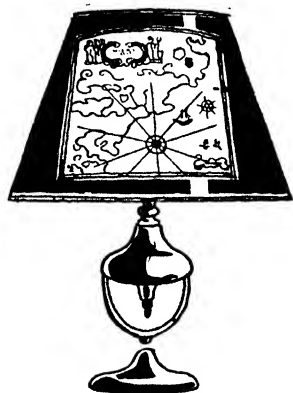
CHAPTER VIII

HOW TO PREPARE AND LACQUER PAPERS

If you have ever attempted to shellac or varnish a piece of decorated paper you have found that the colors are changed, usually neutralized, and that the large masses of background color show most annoying and disappointing streaks. For this reason the paper must first be prepared in the following way.

Make a pan of boiled laundry starch of such consistency that when it cools it is about as thick or slightly thicker than heavy cream. When the starch has cooled, it is brushed or flowed with a large, soft-haired brush quickly and lightly over the whole surface of the paper, being sure that all parts are thoroughly covered. Do not brush hard and do not go back over parts that are already covered. This is particularly necessary with wallpapers, as they are printed with tempera paint and the water in the starch will dissolve the colors and make them run if they are brushed over much. When the starch has dried it forms a protective film over the whole surface of the paper through which the shellac cannot penetrate. The shade is then given a light, even coat of white shellac and allowed to dry eight hours,

after which it can be given another coat of shellac or, better still, a coat of Valspar varnish, which will give it a high lustre and a surface that can be scrubbed without harming it. As we mentioned above, this not only gives you a serviceable shade but it brings out the true value of the colors in the design with great strength and brilliance.

CHAPTER IX

MOTIFS, AND SUGGESTIONS FOR THEIR APPLICATION

On the following pages we illustrate certain motifs of design and suggest their application. We can only illustrate a few of the unlimited possibilities of lamp shade design and we leave it to your ingenuity to create individual shades from these suggestions. You should always bear in mind that simplicity is the keynote of all good design. The shade should be harmonious in color and the colors should harmonize with the room in which it is used. A good lamp shade can sometimes be made easily and quickly without a great deal of labor or expenditure of money. For instance the illustration on page 44 shows what may be done with pleated paper which is on sale at many Art shops. It is only necessary to run a gathering thread through the top of the paper, to put it over the wire frame and tack it in several places to keep it in place. You cannot sew this paper all around, for if you do it will pull out of shape. The material comes in numerous colors and designs, offering an easy, rapid way of making an attractive study lamp.

A hexagonal shade of this type on a substantial pottery base would be particularly appropriate for certain kinds of living rooms. It can be made of parchment with the design either painted or with appliquéd motifs from wallpaper or prints. We show on the opposite page an enlargement of the motif which can be transferred to your shade if desired. Silk or linen could also be used with the design appliquéd with cretonne motifs.

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Certain types of living rooms or drawing-rooms demand a formal classical decoration. The base and shade illustrated here would both conform to a demand of this kind. Appropriate motifs of this type can be found on pottery, in laces, and many wallpapers and can be painted or appliquéd on parchment or fabrics.

Sometimes it is desirable to design a lamp of less formal or more intimate treatment for bedrooms, small table lamps or morning rooms. The panelled effect suggested here is a simple and effective treatment to which almost any motif can be applied. Care must be taken, however, to keep the proportions of your panel correct.
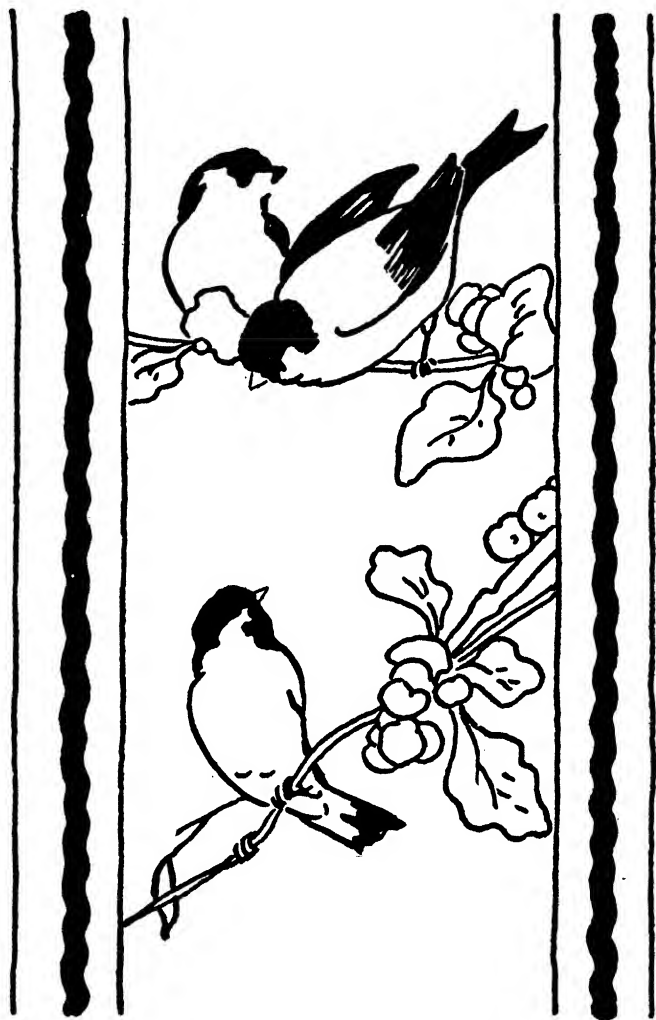
Boudoir lamps demand a simple and delicate treatment. Their simplicity should be such that they stand out from the various feminine decorations and yet give the delicate effect necessary to harmonize with their surroundings. What could be more appropriate than a medallion of the type illustrated, either painted or appliquéd on a shade of delicate coloring and used on a base of old colored glass?

A room furnished with antiques demands a lamp not only harmonious in color with the decorations but also in period with the furniture. The problem of decorating the shade for such a lamp is not difficult. You can find your motifs in the decorations of old painted furniture, wood carvings, old prints and old wallpapers. A particularly successful background for these motifs is an antiqued parchment.

Silhouettes are always popular and justly so. Their simplicity lends itself to the decoration of almost any type of informal shade. It is not necessary that silhouettes always be black. Very pleasant effects can be obtained by painting the silhouette in a darker tone of the background color. That is, if the background of a shade is a buff or cream a silhouette in dark brown would give a softer or more pleasing effect than if it were painted in black. Cut silhouettes in a great number of designs can be purchased and easily applied.
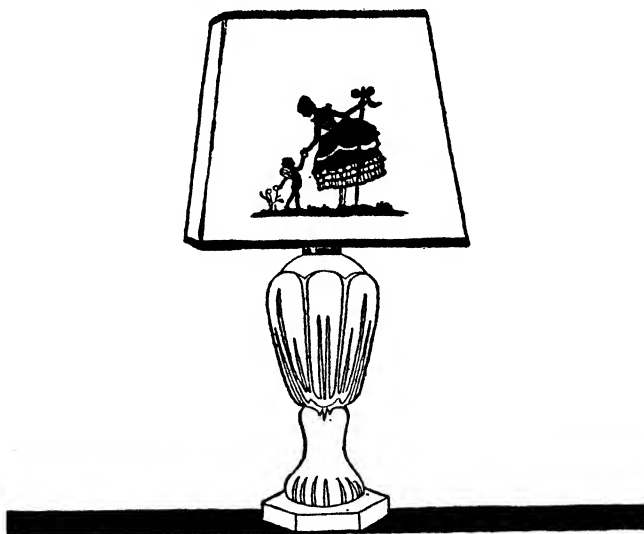
There is something masculine about the shade here illustrated that suggests a man's library, both in design and proportion. Ship designs are always popular and can be adapted to most any type of large shade. While we have shown in this book many designs for shades it often happens that a shade of greater simplicity is necessary. In that case a plain parchment shade, tinted the desired color, with a line of either strong contrasting or harmonious color at top and bottom will probably be more effective.
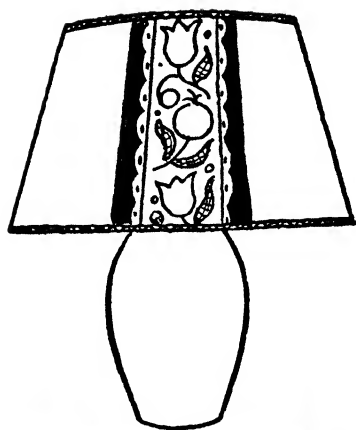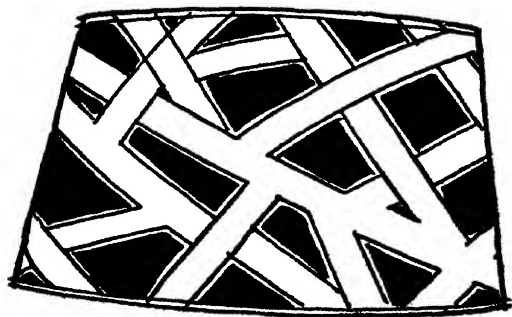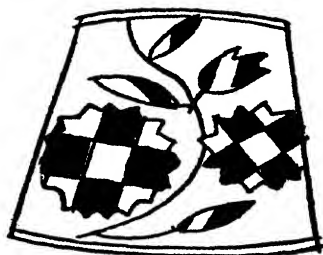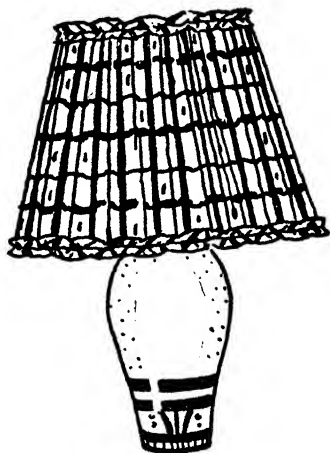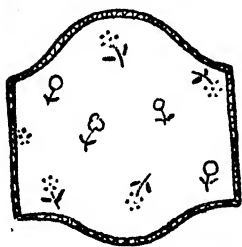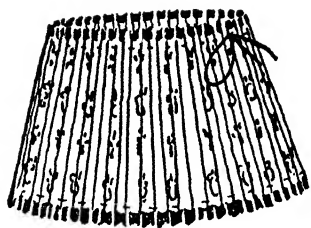
Stencilling is an effective way of decorating a lamp shade. Stencils can be bought at any Art store in a variety of sizes and designs and are easily applied to any material. The new fabric paints which can now be purchased at Art stores simplify the decoration of silk, cotton or linen materials. You can stencil with these or paint on the fabric directly as you would with oil paint on parchment.

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